



The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

Monthly Newsletter of the Sbor Křesťanské společnosti PCF

Suggested Cost 10 Czech Crowns - December 2007

John Mullen, PCF Pastor

Promises of God

Recently I had a dream. Unfortunately I did not write it down but the main bits are still rolling around in my head. I remember the Lord asking me a question; "Why are you asking me, 'What must I do?'" Seems like a natural question for a pastor to ask. However, his second question exposed in me a mindset that was law-based rather than grace-based.

"Why aren't you asking, 'What are your promises for me?'"

Now I certainly had heard about the promises of God. I even once had a book that was all about God's promises (I still remember giving that book away to a man who had just accidentally shot someone – I figured he needed the promises more than me). However, it had been a "loooong" time since I had thought about them. Maybe it is just the plight of the full-time minister/missionary. But I was wondering how many of you had been long living-out of the mindset of serving God rather than living from a place of reaping God's promises for your life.

Now I know that at church we normally teach about service. Eliška recently completed a three part message about service. Service is good. But have we

(Continued on page 3)

What's Inside?

- ◆ Family Profile – Kassidee, Amy & Ben
- ◆ PCF Birthdays & Prayer Info
- ◆ PCF Financial Update
- ◆ Photos of Recent Events

Dawn Custalow and Laura Farrel

Cross-Cultural Servanthood Seminar

Breathtakingly beautiful monastery grounds, historic architecture, cultural teaching by a renowned scholar and the local cuisine at its best. Where were we? Paris, Vienna, St. Petersburg? No, we were right here at home in Prague 6 at the Brevnovsky Klaster (Monastery) to attend a seminar on cross cultural issues from a Christian perspective. November 9 and 10, Laura and Dawn joined approximately 40 others from as many Christians organizations in Prague and the Czech Republic to hear Duane Elmer, the G.W. Aldden

Professor of International Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois present on cultural relationship issues. Generously hosted by Henry and Gabriela Kabatovi in conjunction with Wheaton College faculty members, the seminar proved to be a great success by all the attendees.

Mr. Elmer's basic premise was that the kingdom of God is based on personal relationships. The better we build our relationships, the more we have the opportunity to grow God's kingdom here on earth. Suggestions for improving

relationships between people of different cultures centered on being open to differences. If we can suspend judgment about those differences – not calling them either 'good' or 'bad,' but just 'different' – we may be able to reduce frustration, enhance change, and build trust.

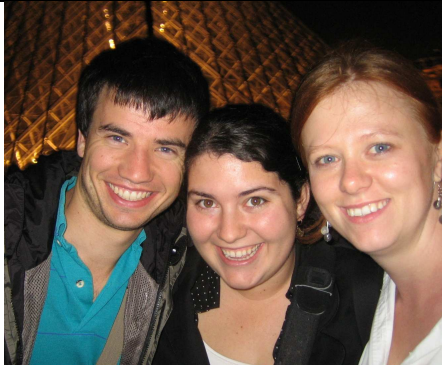
Small group time was given to help process the lecture specifics. During this time we talked about how our own cultural biases might present themselves in situations in which we are blind to see how we act from a cultural value or norm. We spent time



Family Profile

Kassidee, Amy & Ben

The three of us (Kassidee, Amy and Ben) met in the summer of 2005. We were all new teachers with ESI/teachoverseas.org, a Christian teaching organization based out of Pasadena, California. All of us were on the Czech Republic team, with Kassidee and Amy living together with two other girls in Prague, and Ben living with his college friend, Stephen, in Příbram. The three of us became fast friends, joined by our mutual love of doughnuts, card games and a love of quoting television shows (of which we had an uncanny similarity in taste).



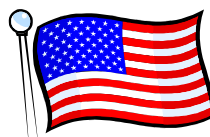
Fellowship while Amy attended Břevnovsky Klášter.

When the decision to stay a third year or not was upon us, the three of us were all elated to discover that the others had chosen to stay for an additional year. We knew that some teaching and living arrangements would need to be shifted around within our organization because of the recruiting dynamics that year brought, and the opportunity for the three of us to be flatmates and colleagues at the same school became a possibility.

Our first two years living in the Czech Republic together were great. We loved getting to hang out as much as possible—visiting Prague and Příbram alternately, travelling around Europe together, and partnering in ministry. This friendship and Christian community was an incredible source of encouragement and support during our adjustment to a longer-term stay in the Czech Republic. It was during our second year that Kassidee and Ben started attending Prague Christian

So for our third year, the three of us are able to share a flat together, teach together, and now we all attend the same church where we can worship together and grow together in our work and our lives and our ministry and our faith. We are blessed and excited by the community we are able to share not only together in our home, but with the greater family at PCF.

Love,
Kassidee Kennedy,
Amy Mann, and
Benjamin Edward
Neilson



(Continued from page 1.... Seminar)
looking at the unique cultural values of the different cultural/nationality groups represented within our small groups to help us gain perspective on our unique cultural attributes and how they form a part of how we think and interact with others.

The time to meet and chat with people from all over Prague and the Czech Republic in Christian ministry was an added bonus of the conference. It was commented that sometimes it can seem that “workers labor alone” here in this city and country. Getting to know others and their ministries was a time to see some big pieces of what God is doing in the Czech culture.

Our minds were full, our stomachs satiated and our hearts encouraged after our weekend together. Duane blessed everyone by providing a free book written on the topics he had taught that weekend. And we all said goodbye in hopes that another event would pull us and others together who serve in Christian organizations here in Prague and the Czech Republic.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the particulars of the material presented at the Brevnov seminar or from other cultural presentations, please contact Dawn. PCF has hosted cultural meetings in the past with the intent that giving ourselves the opportunity to talk about one’s experiences in Prague or the Czech Republic can be a springboard to learning more about the Czech culture as well as adjusting even more quickly. These meetings can be resumed in the new year if there is interest. ■

PCF Finances

October 2007

+43380	Total Income
5,262	Internet & Comm.
8,500	Office Rent & Elec.
5,000	Church Rent
4,033	Supplies & Equip.
0	Copying & Publishing
28,350	Salaries/Employ Tax
0	Evangelism & Teach
690	Church Giving
2,455	Fees & Advertising
530	Miscellaneous
-54,819	Total Expenses
-11,440	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

REFUGEE MINISTRY

Looking for a little warm fuzzy this Christmas season? How about helping the P2 Women's Group coordinate with the Plzen YWAM and CISP who work with a refugee camp. There are some urgent needs there at the moment, to be collected by December 13. Please contact Laura Farrel at 737 145 961

(Continued from page 1.... Promises)

lost the foundation of God's grace that bears the fruit of a life marked by selfless service?

Maybe studying the promises of God unlocks the chains of legalism that slowly, progressively tend to entangle us. Certainly the contrast between focusing on service vs. focusing on God's promises would be clearer if you had the dream I did. Revelation is the best teacher. Over the next few weeks I would like to remind all of you (and me) about the promises of God. Here are three.

1) God has promised to supply all our needs (Phil. 4:19).

And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. Now glory be to God our Father forever and ever. Amen.

This is a good scripture to read your children at Christmas. For most people, Christmas is all about our wants. In our day Jesus and Santa Claus get confused. I mean, some Christians think of God as a celestial Santa Claus who exists to answer our "Christmas list" of wishes and wants. However, God promises to care for our needs, not our wants. Paul is speaking this promise to the Philippians who are generously partnering with him in his ministry. He is reminding them that you cannot out-give God. I believe that the Lord is speaking through Paul that if we seek first the Kingdom of God, He will supply the resources for our needs.

2) God has promised that his grace is sufficient (2 Cor. 12:9).

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

The context here is more than just Paul. The Holy Spirit is speaking to a man who is in the center of God's will. Paul has exchanged his old religious life for Christ's new life of faith. In that place God offers him a promise... "don't worry about your inadequacies... while you are working for me I will be working

through you... and giving you all you need for what you are doing."

3) God has promised that we will not be overcome by temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).

But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.

Again the context of this verse is the people of God. Paul is encouraging the Corinthian community to live for God. Living for God is not always easy. But the Holy Spirit is encouraging the community... "if you give your life to God, the Lord will give you the inner resources to allow that to happen... God will give you the strength to do what your flesh alone cannot do."

These are three of many, many promises. My point today is simply... what other promises has God given us? Rather than asking "what sins can I give up for God?"... how about asking "what does God have to say about how He promises to help me out?" They seem to address the same issue, but from different directions.

Do you want to deal with your sins in your strength or in God's? Do you want to go out and find a spiritual battle to win, or do you want to lift up your current struggle to God and remind him of your weaknesses and need for him? Do you want to work hard, earn your pay and beat out a living, or do you want to invest into God's work and trust Him to take care of your needs?

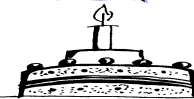
I think we should re-think how we think. You know what I mean? Are we living in a place that only God can move us forward? Or are we living in a safe place where we can handle it, and have a little extra to give to God. We think God should be grateful. "Look what I do." Maybe God is not so impressed. Maybe His plans and His ways are beyond what we could think or ask.

Are you "doing" out of compulsion, or have you found rest in God and are now able to see His fruit? If not, ask Him, *Lord, What are your promises for me?* ■



PRAYER REQUESTS

- 1) **Church Finances** – Please pray for provision to cover our expenses and wisdom in spending and giving.
- 2) **Former PCF members involved with full-time ministry** such as David & Linda Snell, Sam & Rosalee Ewell, Steve & Emma Gower, and Roger & Robin Harsh for God's total provision and protection in their lives. **"Always keep on praying for all the saints." (Eph. 16:18)**
- 3) **Mission trip** to Belarus. Garth plans on leading a group to Minsk on December 18th through 24th to serve with the New Life Church in their ministry to orphans called "With Love for Kids."
- 4) **Christmas Outreaches** in Prague. December 16th is PCF's annual Christmas Service and the annual "Glove, Hat, Sock and Scarf" mercy ministry on December 22nd and 29th. **"Godly people give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will never be forgotten." (2 Cor. 9:9)**



Upcoming Birthdays

The following PCF members past and present will be having birthdays this month.

Jana Deršatová	December 1
Judith Old	December 2
Barbara Denková	December 2
Tasi Gibson	December 3
Justin Kruiženga	December 3
Matthew Ables	December 4
Laura Herrmann	December 8
Ted Whang	December 8
Emma Gower	December 10
Joanne Scott Rudland	December 15
Zora Kounovská	December 17
Andy Herrmann	December 20
Oleg Pimenov	December 21
Lída Rychnovská	December 26
Samuel Gawlik	December 27
Martina Miššíková	December 27
Stephen Cheong	December 29
Joan Rigby	December 29





Photos from top left to bottom right:

Sunday service Nov. 25, 2007. with Rev. Mal Williams and the United Gospel Singers; hosting 75 guests for Thanksgiving Dinner at Majak (Methodist Church); staff photo of New Life Church's ministry – With Love For Kids – in Belarus (PCF mission trip in Dec); and David Lubwama's graduation from Charles University Medical School.

Should you have a testimony to share please email us. The deadline is January 20, 2008